

Item #21: Number of Sensitive Species Management Plans

Evaluation Objectives: To evaluate progress on development and implementation of sensitive species management plans.

Methods: Development of sensitive species management plans or conservation strategies

Evaluation:

The status of various management plans, management guidelines, management assessments and monitoring plans is listed in Table 21-1.

Table 21-1. 2010 Sensitive Species and their Management/Conservation Plan

Species	Management / Conservation Plan
American Peregrine Falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>)	FWS 2003 Monitoring Plan for the American Peregrine Falcon
Bald eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	- FWS 2007 Mgmt Guidelines - FWS 2009 Post-delisting Monitoring Plan for the Bald Eagle - 2010 Montana Bald Eagle Management Guidelines: An Addendum to Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan, 1994,
Black-backed woodpecker (<i>Picoides arcticus</i>)	- FS R1 2005 Samson Maintaining Viable Populations - FS R1 2006 Samson Conservation Assessment - R1 2007 BBWP Project Considerations
Common Loon (<i>Gavia immer</i>)	- FWP 2009 Conservation Plan for the Common Loon in Montana
Flammulated Owl (<i>Otus flammeolus</i>)	FS R1 2005 Samson Maintaining Viable Populations
Harlequin Duck (<i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i>)	2005 MT Comprehensive F&W Conservation Strategy
Fisher (<i>Martes pennanti</i>)	FS R1 2005 Samson Maintaining Viable Populations
Gray Wolf	FWP 2004 Wolf Conservation and Management Plan
North American Wolverine (<i>Gulo gulo luscus</i>)	No plan; Conservation Strategy in Progress
Northern Bog Lemming (<i>Synaptomys borealis</i>)	2005 MT Comprehensive F&W Conservation Strategy
Townsend's Big-Eared Bat (<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>)	- 2005 MT Comprehensive F&W Conservation Strategy - FWS 2011 Plan Managing WNS in Bats
Northern Leopard Frog (<i>Rana pipiens</i>)	2005 MT Comprehensive F&W Conservation Strategy
Western Toad (<i>Bufo boreas</i>)	2005 MT Comprehensive F&W Conservation Strategy

No sensitive species management plans have been written specifically for the Flathead National Forest. A statewide management plan has been written for the common loon. Conservation assessments and evaluations on species viability have been completed for the following sensitive species: flammulated owl, black-backed woodpecker, and fisher. There are national guidelines and the State of Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan. There is a statewide common loon management plan. The State of Montana has conservation strategies for species with the greatest conservation needs. The FNF also has an “Evaluation and Compliance with NFMA Requirements to Provide for Diversity of Animal Communities” document. Sensitive species are evaluated in this document as well as threats to the species, species conservation measures, and an evaluation of the current situation at the forest level are included in the species discussions.

Sensitive species are addressed in every proposed project by completing a biological evaluation. Standards and guides for old growth management (amendment-21), access management (amendment-19) and riparian management (INFISH) have reduced the effects or improved conditions for all of the forest’s sensitive species with the exception of the leopard frog. Most experts, and field surveys confirm, that the leopard frog is perhaps extirpated from much of northwest Montana. A species management plan at the forest level is not an appropriate conservation tool for these species which are found throughout much of northwest Montana, the west, and in some cases the North American continent. As resources allow, the Forest Service has or continues to work cooperatively in partnerships to conserve, monitor or inventory sensitive species which has led to better knowledge to conserve and minimize threats. Those efforts include:

- American Peregrine Falcon – Montana Peregrine Institute (statewide effort)
- Bald Eagle – annual multiagency statewide effort
- Black-backed Woodpecker – FS Regional/U of M–Avian Science Center (statewide)
- Common Loon – FWP, MDNRC, Mt Loon Society, others (northwest Montana)
- Flammulated Owl – FS Regional Survey/Occupancy, U of M – ASC (statewide)
- Harlequin Duck – annual Forest surveys, MNHP (statewide)
- Fisher – FWP track surveys, FS hair surveys
- Gray Wolf – FWS management
- North American Wolverine – FS lead in conservation strategy development
- Northern Bog Lemming – riparian surveys, MNHP
- Townsend's Big-Eared Bat - FS Regional Survey/Occupancy, MNHP surveys
- Northern Leopard Frog – annual Forest herp surveys
- Western Toad – annual Forest herp surveys

The Forest Service has tools in place to address forest management activities that affect sensitive species conservation such as; Forest Plan standards and guides, technical assistance from MFWP biologists, and the “Evaluation and Compliance with NFMA Requirements to Provide for Diversity of Animal Communities” assessment document.

Recommended Action: Support monitoring efforts at the multi-forest or regional scale for species conservation assessments and strategies. Continue to conduct or cooperate in field surveys and keep the Flathead National Forest “Evaluation and Compliance with NFMA Requirements to Provide for Diversity of Animal Communities” document up to date.